



***Staying in shape and in the saddle throughout stay-at-home and beyond.***

They say there is a time and a place for everything. It seems that in light of the things going on in the world that this might be the time, and Blackjack Farm might be the place. Blackjack Farm has been the dream of Robin Martinez and her husband Dionicio since they moved there a little over 8 years ago. A never-ending work in progress, the barn and the business continue to evolve.

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“We joke that the stay at home order doesn’t change our life all that much,” laughs Robin. “But in all seriousness, this time at home has given us an opportunity to really contemplate what it is we want to do with our time, our place and our energy. We’ve really been asking ourselves, where do we want to go from here?”



In the beginning, they set out to create a place where the horses came first, and they have continued to enhance the facility with that in mind. “Additionally,” says Robin “We believe strongly in rider fitness and the importance of a person’s fitness in general. When we designed our place, the gym and running track were as much of a priority as the arena or any other amenity.” Everything from ongoing improvements to the footing, to the beautifully groomed track (used by horses & riders) to the recently installed Eurocisor to the beautiful hay from Oregon that they feed, the horse and rider’s well-being is foremost.

Robin has an extensive education in fitness and sports nutrition. “I’ve had the good fortune of being the fitness expert for Equestriancoach.com for quite a few years and hope to bring more of that type of education to the forefront.” One benefit of being a client at Blackjack that really sets them apart from other riding programs is that personal fitness training is included for all riders in training. “With gyms closing down as a result of the pandemic, having a gym and your own personal trainer at the barn where your horse is really cannot be beat!” says Robin.



### **An Adult Emphasis**

At Blackjack, the riding program has always been geared towards adult riders. Robin has a passion for teaching adults and they really seem to appreciate her ability to break things down and explain the directions being given. “Teaching adults requires a much different set of skills from the instructor,” says Robin. “I have those skills and I work to enhance them every day.” When Robin came back to riding as an adult, she found the programs and methods had disconnect for adult students. “I have dedicated my teaching life to filling in this that gap that I experienced and have positioned myself to be what an adult rider really needs from their instructor. If you ask my students, I am confident they will tell you I’m on the right track!” says Robin.

This time at home has also reaffirmed Robin's love of teaching young horses. "It's not that dissimilar to teaching adults," says Robin. "A young horse needs an explanation if they are to understand and really learn. We are blessed with some fantastic young horses right now and they keep me inspired every day." Blackjack Farms offer Young Horse packages to owners looking to place their future stars in a program geared just to them and their unique needs.

"One other reoccurring theme at Blackjack has been that when visitors come here, they all say how much they wish they could stay for a while," says Robin. With that in mind, they are getting ready to launch an Airbnb on the property. Guests will be able to participate in the activities going on there as much or as little as they like. They can even bring their own horse. They are planning 3- and 5-day bootcamps, allowing visitors to get away from it all and put a real focus on their riding and their fitness. More to come on this as they launch midsummer.

Blackjack Farm is a beautiful place with a tangible focus on horse and rider. There could be much worse places to practice a stay home order.

*For more information please visit [www.blackjackfarmsandiego.com](http://www.blackjackfarmsandiego.com) .*